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A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

QUEEN

AT

WINDSOR,

On *July* the 25*th*. 1708.

By JOSEPH RAWSON, D. D.

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Published By Her Majesties Special Command.

LONDON;

Printed by *E. P.* for *Tho. Baker*, at the *Bible* and *Rose*, in *Ludgate-street*, near the *West-End* of St. *Paul*'s, 1708.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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PSALM xxxvii. 38.

Keep Innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right; for that ſhall bring a Man Peace at the laſt.

In the latter Verſion in the Bible, *Verſe*, 37.

Mark the Perfect Man, and behold the Upright; for the End of that Man is Peace.

IT has been a conſtant Objection, that Senſual Men have made to Religion in all Ages, that all the Rewards, it puts Men in expectation of, are at a great Diſtance, and in Re-

verſion only; but that Vice makes a preſent Payment to its Votaries, ſuch as it is, and obbliges 'em with an immediate Gratification of their Appetites. But at the ſame time they prophanely alledge, that Providence has not ſufficiently guarded the Innocent and the Virtuous in this World. 'Tis no new Complaint, that *All things come alike to all*; that *there is one Event to the Righteous, and to the Wicked; to the Good, and to the Clean, and the Unclean; to him that Sacrificeth, and to him that Sacrificeth not: as is the Good, ſo is the Sinner; and he that Sweareth, as he that feareth an Oath.* Nay, more than this, That *there is a juſt Man that periſheth in his Righteouſneſs, and a wicked Man that prolongeth his Life in his Wickedneſs.*

Eccleſ. ix. 2.

Eccleſ. vii. 15.

This *Pſalm*, of which my Text is part, ſeems to have been written on purpoſe, to anſwer ſuch Objections as theſe.

Fret not thy ſelf, ſays the Royal Prophet, *becauſe of the Ungodly*, (ver. 1.) *neither be thou envious againſt the Evil-doers; for they ſhall ſoon be cut down like the Graſs*, ſwiftly and ſuddenly, *and be withered even as the green Herb*, their continuance ſhall not be long. And then he proceeds, by proper Motives, to excite us to Piety. *Delight thou in the Lord and he ſhall give thee the Hearts deſire. Commit thy way to him, and put thy truſt in him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs. He ſhall*

make thy Righteousness as clear as the Light, and thy just Dealing as the Noon-day. What greater Happiness can there be, than to have our sullied Reputation restor'd to its Primitive Whiteness? And then he proceeds, in several Instances, to discover the great Advantages that accrue to the Pious and Good, and lays open the Dangers and Perils that are the sad Attendants on Irreligion and Vice. So that the Words of my Text may appear like a just Conclusion fairly drawn from Premisses. Since Wickedness has such mischievous Consequences, therefore *Keep Innocency, &c.*

Which words are most worthy of every Man's Consideration, shou'd be suppos'd to be written in Letters of Gold, and be always before our Eyes; and they wou'd make Men Just and Honest in their Shops and Compting-Houses; Virtuous and Chast in their Bed-Chambers, and Religious and Devout even in a Fleet or Camp; and indeed, will be an excellent Direction to Men in their whole Life and Conversation. *Keep Innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right, for that shall bring a Man Peace at the last.*

In Discoursing of which words, which I shall do with all the Plainness I am able, as being desirous rather of making those who hear me more Religious, than more Learned, more

Good, than more Wise, I shall (by God's Assistance)

I. Enquire what *Innocency* is; how we may be said to *keep it*, and if lost, how it may be regain'd, and shew the great Advantages of it.

II. I shall in a few words, speak of the Nature of Justice and Right, *Take heed unto the thing that is right.*

III. To encourage you to *keep Innocency*, and to *take heed to the thing that is right*, it will make you Happy, not only in bringing Peace, tho that be a very great and inestimable Blessing, but in *bringing Peace at the last.*

I. What Innocency is? &c.

The Septuagint call it Ἀκακία, or the doing no Evil, or freedom from Sin, or that happy Condition in which all Mankind had been, had it not been for the unfortunate Transgression of our first Parents.

But it may be ask'd, Where is such Innocency to be found? Is it not too nice and delicate a Plant to grow in the rank Soil of Human Nature? Holy *David*, we know, cry'd out in his sorrowful Address to Almighty God, That

Psal. li. 5. *he was shapen in Wickedness, and in Sin did his Mother conceive him.* So that that there was no Momen

Moment in which he was free from it. And St. *Paul* aſſures us, *That we are by nature Children of Wrath*, which, we could not be, were we Originally Innocent, and Tranſgreſſors only by our Father's Copy. Where then is ſome One to be found that is *Perfect, in Word and in Deed?* I anſwer, None; but the Bleſſed *Jeſus*, the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, *who did not diſdain the Virgin's Womb*, was ever ſo; and in whom the Godhead and Manhood were ſo Myſteriouſly united, who ſpake ſo as never Man ſpake, and did what never any but the Lord of Nature cou'd do. How then, it may be farther ask'd, can we keep that which is not? I anſwer, by asking another Queſtion, How comes it, that our *Bleſſed Lord*, who *beſt knew what was in Man*, ſhould bid his Diſciples and Us, *Be Perfect as our Father which is in Heaven is Perfect?* 'Tis impoſſible, ſtrictly ſpeaking, that Humane Nature ſhould riſe up to the Divine Perfections: We are only charg'd as near as we can to approach 'em, which indeed is the End of the Chriſtian Religion; but more is not requir'd at our Hands. He who takes his aim high, will in all likelihood arrive nearer to Perfection, than he who only ſets Mean things before him for his imitation. To ſtretch and exert our ſelves at ſomewhat out of our reach, may ſometimes be convenient, for the trying our Strength, and

Eph. 2. 3.

St. *Matt.* v. 48.

improving it; and Courage and Induſtry wou'd ſink and be loſt, were they not ſometimes kept up by Imaginary Ideas, that have no real Being. Thus in my Text, *Keep Innocency*, i. e. Keep it as far as you are able, as far as is conſiſtent with Humane Frailties; Keep it as much as the Weakneſſes and Imperfections of our deprav'd and corrupt Nature will give us leave.

But tho' *Innocence*, I mean our *Primitive Innocence*, be loſt, yet there is a way (Praiſed be God) of regaining it. And that is, *Firſt* by *Baptiſm*. And that of Adult Perſons is, *Secondly*, re-obtain'd by *Repentance*.

Acts 2. 38. *Repent and be Baptized every one of you, for the Remiſſion of Sins*, ſaid St. *Peter*, in his Sermon to the very Murtherers of our Bleſſed Saviour. If their Sins were remitted, they were then in the Condition of the very Innocents themſelves. The healthful and ſalutary Waters of *Baptiſm* waſh away *Original Guilt*, and *blot out the Hand-writing of Ordinances againſt us. Buried with Chriſt*

Col. 2. 12, 13. *in Baptiſm*, ſays St. *Paul*, *wherein you are alſo riſen with him. And you, being dead in your Sins, hath he quicken'd together with him, having forgiven you all Treſpaſſes.* Happy then are we *Chriſtians* on innumerable accounts, more particularly on this. That we have a Remedy that will reach as far as the Diſeaſe; and that as in *Adam* all die, even ſo by *Chriſt* and *Baptiſm*, *all ſhou'd be made alive*

gain. That the full and compleat Obedience
f the *laſt Adam*, did make an ample and ſuffi-
ient amends for the Diſobedience of *the Firſt*.
o that from the time of our *Baptiſm*, to the
me of our committing *actual Sin*, we are as
ee from Sin, and are then truly *Innocents*, as
e are call'd, as if *Original Guilt* had never been
ncurr'd. But when we firſt act contrary to
ur Conſciences, and a Senſe of our Duty;
hen we firſt receive an inward Check, which
that faithful Witneſs that God has plac'd in
very One; when we forfeit our Innocence,
hen we are *actual Sinners*, and then, without
epentance, we incur the Divine Diſpleaſure.
nd then

Repentance is that *Secondly*, by which our
nnocency is retreiv'd. *Repent and be Converted*,
id St. *Peter* to the *Jews*, *that your Sins may be* Act. iii. 19.
lotted out*: And if our Sins be *blotted out*, we
re in the ſame happy condition in which we
ere before thoſe Sins were committed. We all
now, or ſhould know, That Sins are called
ebts in Scripture Language. *Forgive us our
ebts, as we forgive our Debtors*, are *our Lord's*
wn Words. And a great reſemblance there is
etween our Sins and Debts in many particu-
rs; they make us Debtors to the Divine Ju-
ice; and in other Inſtances they are alike, and
mongſt others in this, That I believe ſome

Mens

Mens Sins and Debts are greater and more tha they are aware of. To carry on the Metapho If a Debt be forgiven, the Bond given up o cancell'd, the Debtor then is in the ſame condi tion, as if the Debt had never been contracted And ſo it is in our Sins; If, upon our true an hearty Contrition, and godly Sorrow, ou merciful Father hath forgiven us, we are the by his Favour as clear from all Sin, as whe we were carried in our Infancy from the Bapti mal Font. Holy *David* declar'd, That *he woul waſh his Hands in Innocency, and ſo would compa God's Altar.* We are too well acquainted wit his Character, to ſuppoſe, That he cou'd be *I nocent* on any other ſcore, but that of Repen tance, and of Sins forgiven and forgot. Th ſcandalous Affair of *Uriah*, in which there was baſe Complication of Murther and Adultery and his Unwarrantable Numbring the Peopl put a Bar into his Plea of *Innocence*; and his de

Pſal. li. 7. firing Almighty God *to waſh him, and he ſha be whiter than Snow*, ſuppoſes that he was unclea and impure before. To the ſame purpoſe God, by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, requires thoſe o

Chap. i. ver. 16, 18. *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, That they *waſh* and *ma themſelves clean*, by *ceaſing to do Evil, and learnin to do Well*: And then it is graciouſly promiſed that tho' *their Sins be as Scarlet, they ſhall b white as Snow*, tho' they *be red like Crimſon, the*

ſha

hall be as Wool. From all which it appears, hat by the Goodneſs of God, Repentance will upply the place even of Innocence it ſelf. And appy is it for us, that God will again receive s into Favour after our multiplied Offences a-ainſt him; or otherwiſe the Condition of Man ad been very calamitous indeed, born with a ronenеſs and Diſpoſition to Sin, expos'd to umberleſs Temptations from *without*, and *with-* carrying a home-bred Traytor ready and wil-ing to betray him; his Caſe would be moſt ard, were there not a way of being reconcil'd o him. But then our Repentance muſt be deep, nd hearty, and ſincere, or it will not be effectu-l. Our Innocence, 'tis true, is loſt by one ingle Sin, as one Cloud is ſufficient to eclipſe he whole Sun, but 'tis not to be regain'd with-ut long and continual Habits of Repentance: or in the noble Compoſition of a good Chriſti-n, the mixture of one Vice or Folly corrupts nd depraves the whole. And I ſhall add, hat tho' the Wound of Sin be cureable by Re-entance, yet ſtill it ever leaves a Scar behind , to put us in mind that we have been Sinners: nd if we fall back to our former Follies, our ardon will be cancell'd, and our former Sins ill be brought into our laſt Accompt, with nтereſt. And this muſt be ſaid for the Ad-antage of our firſt Innocence, not ſullied by Sin,

that *that* is like a good ſtate of Health, ſound vigorous, and uninterrupted: But Innocence after Repentance, is like Health after a long fit of Sickneſs; the Man is tender and crazie, and for a long time in continual danger of Relapſes.

4. And thus we have look'd into the Nature of Innocence, and laid down the Methods of recovering it when loſt; it remains, that we ſhew the great Advantages of it. 'Tis a Jewel of the greateſt Value that can be, or rather, that is Unvaluable, and Crowns and Sceptres themſelves are not to be compar'd to it. 'Tis Innocence that makes us Eaſie and Happy, and Fearleſs when ſurrounded with Danger; for Men deſtitute of that Support, which is the only Comfort in Diſtreſs, generally want true Courage when there is the moſt occaſion for it. 'Tis Innocence that guards us from all Apprehenſions of Spectres and Apparitions, the Creatures often of our own Fancies and Imaginations; for they who are Conſcious of no Guilt, and fear God, have nothing to fear from Devils, or from Men. 'Tis their ſweet Innocence, their native Simplicity and Tenderneſs, their undiſguis'd Goodneſs and Modeſty, that endears Children, and makes them appear ſo lovely in our Eyes: They have no inward Terror to perplex and ſtartle 'em, every thing with them is Smiling and Happy. 'Tis Innocence is the true Trea-

ſure

ſure indeed, that draws after it no Repentance; 'tis attended with heavenly Peace, the pureſt Joys, refin'd Pleaſures, and at laſt with endleſs Glory. 'Tis Innocency, that has ſomething ſo ſoft and inſinuating, that Envy and Rage have been diſarm'd by it, and a Paſſion more furious than thoſe. 'Tis Innocency that calms our Conſciences, and engages the *good Angels* on our ſide; *they are Miniſtring Spirits* for the good of the Pious, that *they hurt not their Foot againſt a Stone*; they aſſiſt and further 'em in their honeſt Undertakings, and *guard them in all their Ways.* How Honourable, how Happy is it to have thoſe Favourites of Heaven ſo deeply concern'd, and conſtantly vigilant for our Welfare! 'Tis Innocence that gives a Luſtre to Proſperity, and Innocency that makes our *Days* pleaſant and chearful, and our *Nights* eaſie, by removing from us frightful and guilty Dreams.

On the other Hand, what wretched Creatures are Men, when forſaken by that heavenly Queſt? Without Innocency, amidſt the greateſt appearing Pleaſures, there is no full Content and compleat Satisfaction. Like a wounded Deer, that runs over Fields and Woods, and ſwims over Rivers to aſſuage his Pain, but all in vain, ſince he cannot ſhake the fatal Arrow from his Side, *hæret lateri lethalis Arundo*; ſo a Man check'd by a bad Conſcience, can no more fly from the

the ſmarting Reproaches of it, than he can fly from himſelf. He dares not look up to Heaven, from whence he is rather to expect Vengeance than Favour; he is ſtung in his own Thoughts with the remembrance of his Pride and Folly, and all his Sins in moſt dreadful Order are ſtill flying in his Face. And then ſad Horror and cutting Remorſe importunately purſue him; his guilty Mind ſuggeſts to him, That, like

Gen. 4. 13, 14. *Cain, Every one that findeth him will ſlay him*, and *his Puniſhment is greater than he can bear.* If he does think of a Future State, and ſometimes he cannot help it, he has then before his Eyes the ſad and melancholy Territories of Darkneſs, Torment and Execution. So that, to conclude this Head, with Submiſſion be it ſpoken, God himſelf cannot give a more perfect Gift in this World than a clear Conſcience, and a ſpotleſs Innocency to our Lives end.

II. I proceed to my *Second* Particular, which I ſhall diſpatch in a very few Words, that is, to ſpeak to the nature of *Right*. *Take heed unto every thing that is right.*

It appears, we ſee, from the Caution given, That of our ſelves we are not apt to do *the thing that is right*, tho' we are ſtrict enough, God knows, in taking care that every one ſhould *do right* to us. The known Definition of

ing right, is *to give every one his own*, and there cannot be a better Rule, than that golden one, *of doing to others, as we deſire others ſhould do to us*, and this will take off that Partiality that every Man naturally has for himſelf; it appearing from the Practice of too many, that they look upon themſelves, not as Citizens of the whole World and part of the univerſal Family of Mankind, but born for themſelves alone. This in *general* is the Deſcription of the Duty we are ſpeaking of, a Duty that ſpreads its ſelf far and wide into all the Concerns of this World and another: but to deſcend to thoſe Particulars, which are very numerous, would be too tedious for the time allotted for this Diſcourſe. Waving therefore them, *Suum cuique tribuere.*

III. I proceed to my *Third* and *Laſt* Particular, and that is, To encourage you to *keep Innocency*, and to *take heed to the thing that is right*, it will make you Happy, not only in *bringing* Peace, tho' that be a very great and ineſtimable Bleſſing, but it *will bring Peace at the laſt.*

And if I may not be thought to refine too much, perhaps I may ſay, that more may be deſign'd in *bringing* Peace, than *giving* it. We ſometimes give that which is extorted by the Clamours and importunities of the Poor, we relieve our ſelves by it; and ſometimes when the Fit of Charity is over, Men wiſh again, in their harder Minutes,

for what they gave away in their *tender* ones. But when what we give to the Needy is *brought* to them, it looks like the Reſult of Deliberation, and gives a new Luſtre to the Obligation. But I inſiſt not on it. *Keeping Innocency and taking heed to the thing that is right, will bring a Man Peace at the laſt.*

Pax optima rerum Quas homini noviſſe datur, Pax una triumphis Innumeris melior.

And when I have ſaid, *It will bring Peace*, what have I further to add? Peace with God, Peace with Men, and Peace with our ſelves. *Peace the beſt thing that Men were ever yet acquainted with; Peace that is to be preferred to a thouſand thouſand Triumphs.* *Peace* that was brought by way of Largeſs at our *Saviour's* Birth: *On Earth Peace*, a Gift worthy of him who ſent it, a Gift worthy of him who brought it. *Peace*, the laſt Gift our *Bleſſed Lord* bequeathed to his Diſciples, and ſurely *then* he would not have given mean things. *Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you not as the World giveth, give I unto you.* For the Sake of *Peace*, in Expectation only, we ſubmit to the rough and hazardous Methods of War, and for the ſake of *that* we reliſh with Pleaſure thoſe Victories that taſte ſo ſtrong of Blood, ſo dearly bought with the Blood of Thouſands, and the Tears of the Fatherleſs and the Widows.

St. John 14. 27.

If then this *Worldly Peace* only be ſo valuable that we refuſe nothing to obtain it. What ſhall we ſay of that *heavenly Peace, that paſſes all Under-*

ſtanding

anding, which neither the *Tongue of Men* or *An-els* can deſcribe; for *this* alſo ſhall be the happy Conſequence of *keeping our Innocency and taking eed unto the thing that is right, for that ſhall bring s Peace at the laſt.*

But how great a Felicity is it to have it, were only in this World! when we are deſtitute of ll other Earthly Comforts, *then* to have *Peace f Conſcience*, is the moſt perfect Bleſſing that e can enjoy *in this Life*, and will be a great part f *that* in the *next*. For when one half of a Man is benum'd with a *Palſie*, or he is burnt p with a *Feaver*, or drown'd with a *Dropſie*, wrack'd with the *Gout*, or tormented with the olick or *Stone*, or almoſt Breathleſs with an ſthma; when he is under theſe calamitous Cir-mſtances, his weeping Friends wringing their ands about his Bed: Then to have Peace of ind, and a full Aſſurance of the Divine Fa-our, beyond the *dark Cloud* of Afflictions to ſee me refreſhing *Beams of Light*; is not this a leſſing not rightly to be valued, and does not is in thoſe ſorrowful Moments relieve a Man, nd make him *more than Conqueror*? But if at at time, his Conſcience does not ſpeak Peace him, how ſad, how lamentable is his Con-ition, to ſtruggle with the Diſtemper and thoſe rrible Reflections at the ſame time, and alſo have the worſt of future Expectations. To

have

have good reaſon to believe, that theſe are bu
the beginnings of Sorrows, to have Hell-fir
flaſhing in our Eyes, and to be convinc'd, tha
we are juſt about to be plung'd into the Bottom
leſs-pit, *where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire i*
not quencht: is not *this* a fore-taſte of Hell, an
is not this the ſoreſt Evil and the greateſt Curſ
in this Life? To have before our Eyes ou
wretched Company, thoſe damned Spirits; wit
a Spiritual Eye to ſee that penal Fire, thoſe ever
laſting Burnings, thoſe Torments that will neve
have an End, this is intolerable, and yet this i
the ſure and certain Wages of Sin.

But to refreſh you with a more comfortabl
Proſpect, *He ſhall have Peace at the laſt*; Peac
alſo when this World ſhall be no more. Pea
and Reſt and Joy in Heaven, a place more fu
of Delight than we can poſſibly imagine.
place, in which we ſhall be free from thoſe anx
ous Cares to which our Weak and Imperfe
Sublunary State is expos'd. A place, in which
Tears ſhall be for ever wip'd from our Eyes, in whic
there is nothing we can wiſh for or fear, for w
ſhall have All that our moſt longing Deſires ca
thirſt after, and nothing can approach to hurt u
All things there will be at an end, except our Joy
and *Our Joy no Man taketh from us.* There wi
be no parching Heat to offend us, no North
winds to chill our Blood. Envy and Jealouſ
an

and all the train of corrupt Paſſions will be for ever baniſh'd from that Happy place. The Day *there* will be perpetual, and the Night will never draw her Sable Curtain over them. Mortality is a flaw in all *Earthly Tenures*, but their Title is indiſputable and indefeizable. But I muſt no longer loſe my ſelf in a *Theme*, in which it is ſo eaſie to ſpeak much, and ſo impoſſible to ſay enough. 'Tis a Collection of all Happineſſes, 'tis beyond expreſſion, 'tis beyond imagination. The moſt exalted Fancy will fall as ſhort in the Deſcription of it, as the very loweſt and the meaneſt.

And thus having diſpatch't my *Third* and laſt particular, I crave leave to apply all, and ſhall then conclude.

1. *Firſt* then, Since Innocency is found to be of ſo great Value, is it not of the higheſt concernment to us, that we do all we can, either to preſerve it or regain it? In order to this, I addreſs my ſelf, *Firſt* to the Young; to thoſe whoſe Innocency is the leaſt ſtain'd and ſulli'd. For tho', as is prov'd before, a perfect and unſinning Innocence is not to be found, yet there is a comparative one, that may paſs for ſuch, if plac'd near the Lives of thoſe who are continually offending. And Youth is an unthinking part of Life, or they who enjoy it would not ſo eaſily part with their *Innocence*, ſo ſoon loſt, but recover'd with ſo much difficulty. 'Tis too often that then they deceive themſelves and

ſtifle thoſe Remorſes, which give a check to unlawful Deſires. They forget that Youth, like ſome Flowers, is almoſt as ſoon decay'd and wither'd as blown; that Old Age continually perſues us, and at laſt will overtake us, when we ſhall diſreliſh thoſe things that at preſent are ſo gratifying and obliging. That *that Age* is an Enemy of Pleaſures, is a Burthen to it ſelf: That every Sin of our Youth does add a new weight to it, and makes that part of Life uncomfortable and uneaſie. And however tempting and engaging Iniquity may ſeem to the Gay and Frolickſome, and however they may flatter themſelves with the hopes of a time of Recollection hereafter, yet it is moſt certain, that the Pleaſures of Sin are not ſolid and laſting, it gives a terrible Future remorſe, and draws after it a long Repentance. Like the Book in *the Revelations*, if
Rev. x. 9. *it be ſweet as Honey in the Mouth*, like *that* after Digeſtion *it will make the Belly bitter*. *Keep* then *your Innocency*, if you can, which is the greateſt Treaſure in the World; 'tis the nobleſt Amulet, and beſt Preſervative againſt the Poiſon and Infection of the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil. Endeavour to cultivate your Souls, by adorning them every Day with ſome new Virtue. Form your tender Minds to the Love of God and Religion, excite ſtrong Deſires after Holineſs in your Hearts, and a ſincere Love of Virtue,

and

d arm them with firm Reſolutions of adhering
it.

Secondly, I apply my ſelf to thoſe who are grown
, to thoſe that are farther advanc'd in Years
d Folly, to thoſe who have not *kept* their *Inno-*
nce: And Pfear this Head will comprehend the
eateſt, much greateſt part of Mankind. To
oſe my moſt Earneſt and Paſſionate Exhorta-
n is, That they endeavour to regain and re-
eve it by all Means they poſſibly can.
The Value of it is ineſtimable, they cannot
ve too much for it. 'Tis like the *Field in the*
ſpel, if a Man gives all he has for it, the Pur-
aſe of it is not dear. If a Man ſells his Meals,
s Sleep, his Recreations and Diverſions, his
ody, his Eſtate, his All: If he can attain it,
s an eaſie Bargain, he does not pay too much
r it. Labour for it as for hidden Treaſures; it
ill amply Reward your utmoſt Diligence and
abour, when in your Poſſeſſion. and needs
uſt it be of the higheſt Value, ſince all Men
entre in the eſteem of it. They who have it,
now the unſpeakable Felicities of it; they who
ave it not, ſome of them would give ten thouſand
Worlds, could they command them, that they
ad it: So that how excellent muſt *that* be, that
one but the moſt profligate can diſregard? On
umberleſs accounts it is very valuable; were
ſo on no other, yet *this* alone would ſufficiently

ently recommend it, that without it *there is no Peace.*

What Fruit can you promiſe your ſelf from thoſe things, that (generally ſpeaking) create preſent Reluctance? may be fairly ask'd of thoſe who are careleſs of this Jewel. For Almighty God has curſt the bitter Tree of Sin, that no good Fruit ſhall grow thereon for ever; and in every Sin in which we forfeit our *Innocence*, we forfeit our *Peace* and Happineſs at the ſame time. Thus for inſtance, What is Intemperance in Eating, but a more refin'd way of Poiſoning us? What is Drunkenneſs, but a ſhort Madneſs? Does not Luſt debaſe us to the Nature of Beaſts? And in every deviation from the Will of God and the Rules of Reaſon rectified, we lay a Foundation for Repentance *here*, or Eternal Miſery *hereafter*. Were there to be no future Recompence for Virtue and *Innocency*, yet the Calmneſs and Sereneneſs of Mind that attends 'em here are very ample Rewards; whereas in Vice there is ſomewhat ſo odious, that Men dare not look into themſelves, and *that alone* might deter them from that which brings neither true Pleaſure, Honour, nor Profit, and always makes a Man uneaſie to himſelf.

Once more, *Thirdly*, I crave leave to make a more general Application. If *Keeping Innocency and doing the thing that is Right, will bring a Man*

Peace

Peace at the last, Why may it not bring Peace to Communities and Nations, if to *One*, why not to *Many*? And if so, must it not create uneasie Reflections in us, that, notwithstanding our amazing Success, if any Success can be amazing from *the most Accomplish'd General*, commanded by *the very best of* QUEENS: Notwithstanding this, That the Blessing of *Peace* (the Wish and Desire of all *Europe*, except of *the common Enemy and Oppressor*, who delights in prolonging its Miseries) *Our* more than daily Prayer, *Give Peace in our time, O Lord*, that this Blessing should be so long deny'd us, and that we have not yet obtain'd the *request of our Lips* and Hearts? For *War* of it self, ev'n tho' it be Successful, during its continuance, is a sore Calamity; and we always pay dear for *Victories*, that are not to be had without the Blood of our brave Fellow-Subjects; the meaneſt of whom that falls in the Day of Battel, has either a Father that begat him, or a Mother that bore him, or some Relation or Friend to lament and wring their Hands for him. But when War is Unsuccessful, and *we fly before the Enemy*, 'tis *then* One of the soreſt Evils, 'tis *then* rank'd with the Famine and Plague, as appears from the sad Option that *David* was to make, for his Numbring the People. And this ought always to be dreaded by those who are engag'd in it; more especially, by us who

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have a *Prince* to deal with, who has long look'd upon *Us* with a Malicious Eye, for obſtructing his ambitious Deſigns, and what he calls *his Glory*: As if any ſolid Glory cou'd be obtain'd by laying whole Countries Deſolate, and by being laviſh of the Blood of his own Subjects, and that of others too. A Prince that has been long permitted by Providence to proceed in the open Violations of *Innocence* and *Right*, a Scourge to Mankind, that has both deſerv'd and wanted it. What Peace then can be to *Him*, or what Peace made with *Him*, whoſe whole Life has been a continued Scene of Injuſtice and Violence, and infamous for the Breaches of the moſt ſolemn Publick Treaties, and Edicts? But as God does often burn that Rod, with which he does correct his own Children, ſo we hope that this *Great troubler of* Iſrael, who like *Siſera*, has ſo often Fought againſt *the Armies of the living God* like him will receive his final Overthrow and Defeat from the Arms of *a Brave and Illuſtrious Woman*. And if we proceed with him, as we have begun, His Subjects will not complain much longer, *That they groan under the weight of his Glory*.

But ſuch a compleat Deliverance is not to be expected, till we diſcard our Sins, and regain *our Innocency*: And unleſs this be done, *God will be ever'd of ſuch a People* as we are; too many of whom

hom have declar'd War, not only against our E-
emies, but against Virtue and Religion too, our
eſt Friends. I had much rather be an Orator of
ur Praiſes, but I muſt do Juſtice and ſay, That
ur Sins are great and numerous, and crying, and
me of that ſort, that *the Publick* at laſt, if we
ow not wiſer, in time muſt ſuffer by. Thus,
r Inſtance, by our Quarrels and Miſunderſtand-
gs among our ſelves, by our unwiſe and odi-
us Diſtinctions, our ranging our ſelves into
arties, as it were into Order of Battel; this
hich is the Happieſt of all Governments, has
een in danger of ſuch Wounds which the Dexte-
ty and Skill of future Ages will not eaſily cure.
ut I will not enlarge upon our Diviſions, leſt I
nfortunately inflame a Wound I would moſt glad-
heal. But what Hand is tender and bold enough
or that Employment? So that ſuffer me only to ſay,
hat it muſt be beyond the common Degrees of
adneſs to quarrel at *this time*, when our Enemies
re ſo Powerful and Deſperate, and when an entire
nion of Hearts and Affections is ſo neceſſary.
hat will Poſterity ſay, that ſits in Judgment
pon the Memory of thoſe before them? ſurely
his, That we did not know on what Ground
we ſtood, nor will they ſay, That we were a
wiſe and underſtanding People, that would ſuffer
our Paſſions and private Intereſts to interfere
with our Duty, and the publick Good. Would

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a Wise and good Man hazard any Ways a Ship in which he was embark'd (and we all ſail in the ſame Bottom, and muſt ſink or ſwim together) becauſe every thing in it was not manag'd and order'd, as he would have it? If we in good Earneſt think of theſe things, they will cover us with Confuſion; if we have any Remains of the Love of our Country left, we muſt be wanting in no good Office that may tend to its Preſervation, and Welfare, and Honour.

In order to this, love and obſerve Religion, for nothing is ſo deſirable as the Favour of God, and ſo dreadful as his Anger: Whether we ſhall be conſider'd in a publick or private Capacity, there is nothing ſo Beneficial as that. For if we will *amend our Ways* and our Doings, our Hopes will have an ample Field to range in: But if we will not, the Burning of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* is an Example eternally dreadful, and God can deſtroy thoſe who will not be humbled. Do them all the good you can; keep Innocency as far as you can, for this is the Perfection of humane Nature, and (in the beſt Senſe, a *Being like the moſt High*; this will not only *bring* you *Peace* here tho' that will be a great Bleſſing, but will in due time convey you to the Regions of Eternal Peace and Glory. To which Holy and Happy Place may God, in his own time, bring us all, for Jeſus Chriſt's Sake. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

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